

drums etc workshop
sounds & grooves & layers

by

robbert van hulzen

(drummer & composer from amsterdam, netherlands)

three days, four hours a day
dates & timings to be confirmed

registration fee rs 2,000

bodhi muzzik, raag durbar 2c
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sounds & layers in contemporary drumming

Drummers sometimes get so focused on keeping time that the attention for sound colour and quality is forgotten. In this workshop, we'll work on more "orchestral" ways of playing the drums.

The way we arrange a groove for a song often follows a standard pattern, from the shift to the ride cymbal in the chorus to the ubiquitous back beat. In the first part of this workshop, we'll check out what "groove" and "sound" are and do, and try to see the drum kit as a varied collection of sounds, picking specific sounds for specific purposes. By carefully using a group of a few sounds, and alternate it with another set of sounds, we can bring more depth to the music. With a better awareness of what sounds to use when, thinking of the mood of the music, the intensity, the place of a section in a bigger arrangements and so on we can make our role in the band or orchestra more musical, and more meaningful.

In our sound investigations, we'll use "extended techniques" – producing sounds in alternative ways (rubbing, scraping, bowing, using wire brushes and chop sticks and knitting needles), finding not-so-obvious sounds in our drumkit (rims, snare side of the snare drum, resonance heads etc), and using extra percussion (bells, woodblocks, found objects, etc). We drummers are the luckiest musicians: not only does the largest amount of musical instruments classify as "percussion", but even other objects, from wine glasses to brake drums, can be a fantastic addition to music.

Another way of using sound is working with layers. We can approach this from two angles: we can divide a part among various players, or we can assign different functions to the instruments: some give the basic groove, some play developing structures, yet others form the bridge between them. Music of course does not function according to strict limits, so we'll end up combining these approaches. Additionally, we can use layers of different lengths, even different – though related – tempos. What constitutes a musical relationship, till what point will our ears and brains accept different parts as being part of the same piece of music?

We'll finish the workshop with creating a number of pieces and recording them – everyone will get a copy on CD.



Robbert van Hulzen is a drummer from the Netherlands. While music has taken him many places (Indonesia, the US, Palestine, Canada, Italy, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain etc), he has a special relationship with India, which he's been visiting for the past fifteen years, learning about South Indian music and playing with various groups.

At the moment, he is preparing *Elephant Songs*, a 20,000 kilometre musical motorcycle ride: he'll ride a vintage Enfield Bullet from Nepal to South India and on

to Europe, performing and recording with musicians on the way.

The Madras based chamber jazz trio oto.3, led by Maarten Visser, is one group that keeps him busy during his visits to the subcontinent; next to that he works with musicians from the fusion scene and the classical world, including players like bassist Misko M'ba, veena player Manjula Nagesh, and percussionist Anoor Anantha Krishna Sharma.

In Amsterdam, he works with mathpunk band Lola Montez, dancer Michael Jahoda, contemporary gamelan ensemble Gending, and many others, writes and produces music for film and theatre, and teaches drums as well as organising and leading musical projects in schools and community centres.

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